



## **Old Nansemond County Courthouse**

### **C. 1840**

This courthouse is the third such structure on this site in the 500 block of North Main Street. The first courthouse was destroyed by the British during the Revolutionary War. The second one was lost in the great fire of 1837.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Court day was important for business, political and social activities. The courthouse occupies what was then and is still a prominent location befitting its importance to the community.

The handsome Greek Revival Structure is still in use, housing the General District Court and the Juvenile and Domestic Relations court as well as the Suffolk School Board offices. The offices of the latter are in a rear addition constructed in 1958.

This is the last public building in Suffolk left from the nineteenth century having escaped the fate of the City Market (1891-1962), the Nansemond County Clerk's office (1894-1987) and so many others.

## Note From The President

To Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Cox  
Mr. and Mrs. Barry Mason  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Krumpe  
Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Chambers  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hill  
St. John's Church  
Wesley Chapel  
Oakland Christian Church

The Suffolk-Nansemond Historical Society extends heartfelt thanks and gratitude. Over five hundred people came to Chuckatuck last December 4th and 5th. What a tour - What a treat!

To the organizers, chairmen, hostesses, decorators, musicians, cooks, parking attendants, etc. - thank you, thank you for a job well done! Suffolk is a special place inhabited by gracious, talented people!

To all members - please mark March 21st on your calendars. This meeting will be interesting, very informative and fun. If you know a prospective member, do bring them. Also, mark June 13 because J.E.B. Stuart, IV will be here as our guest and speaker. This should be a really big night for members only!

Indeed, our society is alive and well. We have big jobs to accomplish, even bigger dreams to address and a town that needs us desperately.

Thank all of you for your support and please encourage your family and friends to join. We are sitting on a large, historic and beautiful gold mine called Suffolk, our home. The old city cries out for our help! It was once so proud. It can be again, if we care.

My best regards for a wonderful 1994!

*Betsy W. Brothers*



## March Business Meeting

Once again this year we will enjoy great food and fellowship at our annual business meeting/covered dish supper. This year it will be held on Monday, March 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the Lee-Jordan Clubhouse off Pitch Kettle Road. We will provide beverages, bread, and desserts. You bring your favorite salad or casserole.

We will also have show and tell. (Does it seem like kindergarten again?) Bring a picture or some item of historic interest-especially those pertaining to Suffolk history-and share with us.

This meeting will include election of officers. Bob Chissom and Council candidates Andy Damiani and Sammy Carterwill be on hand to answer questions about downtown.

And a Raffle! Did you see the wonderful basket of publications, prints, and edibles at St. John's church during Candlelight Tour? It's on display now in the Riddick's Folly Gift Shop. Rush down to the Folly and buy a handful of tickets (\$1.00 each) or buy them at our meeting. We'll have the drawing at the March 21 meeting. You don't have to be present to win but we hope you are.

If you can come we would appreciate your calling 539-3055 or 539-6312 to let us know. It is not essential but it will help us prepare for the appropriate number.

**Directions:** From Constance Road turn onto Pitchkettle Road and follow it over the bypass. Pass Pitchkettle Point on the right and Lake Kilby Road on the left. Immediately after that you will see the small white sign for the Lee-Jordan Clubhouse on the left. Turn down the wooded drive. It's two miles from Constance Road.

## Trip to Historic Edenton, N.C. April 15

Enjoy a leisurely walk through beautiful blooming gardens where you can hear mini lectures on some of the most interesting gardening topics today. We'll also visit an antique show that includes 50 vendors and have a delicious lunch in the town square. Some historical buildings will be opened exclusively for our group. Call 934-1390 to make reservations. Limit 25 people. Cost per person will be announced soon. Sponsored by Suffolk Art League, Suffolk-Nansemond Historical Society and Riddick's Folly.

## For Your Calendar

- Our 1994 meeting schedule
- March 21 - Business meeting
  - April 15 - Edenton Tour
  - June 13 - Special event\*
  - October 10 - to be announced
  - December 2-3 - Candlelight Tour weekend

## The Lee Jordan Club House

Mr. John Lee and Mr. T. A. (Alex) Jordan were fishing buddies who constructed a clubhouse in the woods near Lake Cohoon sometime in the 1920's. Mr. Jordan had come to Suffolk from Gates County, North Carolina, some years earlier to seek his fortune. He started his Reliable Peanut Company (at the present site of Webb Transfer) about the same time Mr. Obici started Planters Peanuts. Mr. John Lee was in the real estate business.

The two men and their friends used the clubhouse for card games every Thursday night and every Saturday night. They fished on Sundays.

At the death of T. A. Jordan his brother, Will, inherited the clubhouse. The building was still used by the men but it was also the usual place for Jordan family reunions. Mr. Will Jordan allowed church and civic organizations to rent the building for dinner meetings.

The chief attraction of the clubhouse for those organizations was, no doubt the culinary skill of Norman Gary, a former Navy cook who had a knack for country cooking. (We've included one of his best recipes for your enjoyment.) He had replaced a man named Alphonso whose last name is lost to us.

At Will Jordan's death by the terms of his will the Lee-Jordon Clubhouse was given to the Old Dominion Area Council Boy Scouts of America. It was then sold to the group of Suffolk men who own it today- PKG, Inc. Sometime over the years the original clubhouse burned. It was repaired or reconstructed and has been enlarged over the years. Never mind the small changes; it continues as a friendly gathering spot for Suffolk people.

### Norman's Stewed Tomatoes

1 #2½ can tomatoes	½ stick oleo (margarine)
1½ c. sugar	¼ lb. saltines

Cook over boiling water about 2½ hours. Simmer tomatoes awhile then add saltines. When dissolved, add sugar, then butter or oleo. Pour in casserole to reheat and serve.

## Suffolk Downtown Association

Just a brief note to give you an update on Downtown activity. As you know, City Council has approved funding for the A&E Study, acquisition of land, and construction of a courthouse in a location yet to be determined. We are, of course, very hopeful that the new facility will be Downtown. The City Council appointed site review and selection committee has recently chosen an architectural firm to guide the project. Fee negotiations will begin soon. Three of the potential sites are Downtown and another is outside the

Downtown area. This firm will provide the expertise to move the project forward.

Thanks to Mr. G.P. Jackson's generous donation of the historic Professional Building to the Western Tidewater Community Services Board, major construction activity will be underway by late spring. This building will undergo a \$1.5 million renovation and will house the consolidated offices of several locations in Suffolk. In addition to the construction activity, over one hundred new employees will be coming to Downtown.

P.C.A. Ltd., a local partnership, has acquired the former Leggett Building and almost 19,000 square feet of this building is preleased. Suffolk Community Health Center will occupy close to 9,000 square feet and the Virginian Pilot, just this week, signed a lease for approximately 7,000 square feet. The balance of the first floor is being negotiated with a retail tenant. We are assisting the owners in trying to find a tenant(s) for the second floor. In addition to the number of jobs created, the new owners intend to redo the front facade to make it more attractive and in keeping with the historic and architectural history of Downtown.

As you know, we have been negotiating with Portsmouth's New York Deli to come Downtown and we hope to have this popular restaurant in place by May.

The former Byrum's Hardware building has been acquired by investors and they are studying potential uses.

This week, we met with Frazier Associates, a preservation architectural firm from Staunton, and reviewed numerous buildings Downtown for potential facade improvements. Implementation of exterior improvements to buildings such as the Super 10 property, W. Washington Street properties, and others on N. Main Street are important elements in our revitalization.

Last, but not least, we are now sharing office space with the Department of Economic Development. This arrangement of sharing administrative and support services with Tom Waller is working well and we hope that our cooperative efforts will greatly enhance future projects.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,  
Robert Chisom  
Executive Director

## Virginia Hosts America's Largest Open House

The Sixty-first Annual Historic Garden Tour sponsored by the Garden Club of Virginia will be observed in Suffolk on April 27. It will be a tour of four lovely homes in the Riverview area. The hours are 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The price for a block ticket is \$10.00 and single admission is \$4.00. Lunch will be available at Riddick's Folly.

## **News from Riddick's Folly**

Have you visited Riddick's Folly lately or are you planning to visit soon? Now is a great time to visit the 1837 Greek Revival home of Mills Riddick and see the many pieces of furniture just added to the house. All furnishings at Riddick's Folly are Empire pieces from the early 19th century. Five rooms, including two chambers, are furnished to offer an accurate image of the past. In addition, proper window treatments will soon be hung in the parlors.

A variety of exhibitions and cultural programs will be offered this Spring at Riddick's Folly. A student art exhibit from Suffolk City Schools will celebrate Youth Art Month in March while other Spring exhibits include a display of miniature farm toys and a needlework exhibit from the Tidewater Chapter of Embroiderer's Guild. A Women's History Month Living History Tour will be presented by the Lakeland High School Drama Club at 3:00 p.m. on March 13. Visitors will meet historical characters including Anna Mary Riddick from Riddick's Folly. A luncheon for Suffolk's Garden Tour Day will be held at Riddick's Folly on April 27 from 11:00 a.m. - 3 p.m. Delicious homemade goodies will be served in decorated apple bags. Lunches are \$6.00 and can be eaten in or taken out. An audio visual presentation, "Furniture of Eastern Virginia" will be shown at Riddick's Folly May 1-8. This program examines the pieces of early furniture from Norfolk, Richmond, Fredericksburg and the Eastern Shore

and will be shown daily 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tuesday - Friday and Sunday 3 p.m.

Riddick's Folly is open Tuesday - Friday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 - 5 p.m. For more information about the programs and exhibits at Riddick's Folly or for more information about guided tours or summer programs for children call 934-1390.

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## **From the Museums**

### **Upcoming Schedule of Events at the Suffolk Museum**

March 4 - 27 "Architectural Art" Suffolk Photography Club's 10th Annual Photography Contest and Exhibit

April 12 - May 22 "Making Music"

Exhibit will include collector's music boxes, musical instruments, and other music-related items.

June 1-30 "Suffolk Art League Open Members Show and Sale" Artwork by local and regional artists with most work for sale.

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Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10am - 5pm

Sunday, 1pm - 5pm

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# *Look out Yankees! Jeb Stuart is coming to Suffolk on June 13*